

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-13 EB-11 AGR-20 SCEM-02 INT-08

COME-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 DRC-01 /172 W

----- 117194

R 172123Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1740

INFO AMCONSUL CALARY

AMCONSUL HALIFAX

AMCONSUL MONTREAL

AMCONSUL QUEBEC

AMCONSUL ST JOHNS

AMCONSUL TORONTO

AMCONSUL VANCOUVER

AMCONSUL WINNIPEG

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, CA

SUBJECT: LIBERAL PARTY CONVENTION

REF: OTTAWA 2217

1. LIBERAL PARTY CONVENTION CONCLUDED SEPTEMBER 16  
WITHOUT MAJOR INCIDENT, BUT HEATED DEBATE ON SOME ISSUES  
HIGHLIGHTED REGIONAL DIFFERENCES WITHIN PARTY. SENATOR  
GILDAS MOLGAT OF MANITOBA WAS ELECTED PARTY PRESIDENT.  
ONLY NINE PERCENT OF DELEGATES VOTED TO HOLD LEADERSHIP  
CONFERENCE THIS YEAR, IN EFFECT A STRONG ENDORSEMENT OF  
PRIMIN TRUDEAU AS PARTY LEADER. TRUDEAU HIMSELF WAS WELL  
AND WARMLY RECEIVED BY CONVENTION, FOLLOWING UNCHARACTERISTICALLY  
FORCEFUL POLITICAL PEP-TALK, CALLING ON LIBERAL PARTY  
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TO MOVE TO THE OFFENSIVE, AFTER "HOLDING ACTION" OF PAST

YEAR. TRUDEAU CALLED OPPOSITION CLAIMS THAT GOVERNMENT WAS FORCED TO FOLLOW NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY (NDP) POLICIES "HYPOCRISY." SAID LIBERALS WERE PREPARED FOR ELECTIONS AND TO GIVE OPPOSITION PARTIES "FIGHT OF THEIR LIVES." CONTRAST BETWEEN THIS AGGRESSIVE POLITICAL STANCE AND ALOOF DISINTEREST OF LAST OCTOBER'S ELECTION CAMPAIGN WAS NOT LOST ON DELEGATES, WHO RESPONDED ENTHUSIASTICALLY.

2. PERHAPS MOST INTERESTING REVELATION AT CONVENTION WAS EXTENT TO WHICH ALIENATION OF WESTERN PROVINCES WITH FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS PREMEATED LIBERAL PARTY. WESTERNERS ASKED TRUDEAU WHY GOVERNMENT HAD CONTROLLED PRICES ONLY FOR GOODS PRODUCED IN WEST (OIL AND BEEF) AND WERE SHARPLY CRITICAL OF TWO-PRICE POLICY, SAYING IT WOULD CLOSE U.S. MARKETS TO ALBERTAN OIL. SENATOR VAN ROGGEN OF BRITISH COLOMBIA INTRODUCED RESOLUTION CON-DEMNING OIL POLICY WHICH EVIDENTLY DREW WIDE WESTERN SUPPORT. ENERGY MINISTER MACDONALD EVENTUALLY NEGOTIATED COMPROMISE TO EFFECT/THAT PRODUCING PROVINCES WOULD RECEIVE "LARGE PART" OF REVENUES FROM EXPORT TAXES. (PARTY RESOLUTIONS ARE NOT NECESSARILY BINDING ON GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, IN COMMONS SEPTEMBER 17 MACDONALD INDICATED GOVERNMENT WOULD MAINTAIN TWO-PRICE OIL POLICY BUT WOULD SEEK TO CONVEY MOST OF RESULTANT REVENUES TO PRODUCING PROVINCES. HE REFUSED TO GO INTO DETAILS.)

3. THOUGH PARTY LEADERS MAKING TRADITIONAL POST-CONVENTION STATEMENTS ABOUT PARTY UNITY, THERE NO ILLUSION THAT REGIONAL DIFFERENCES RESOLVED OR EVEN LESSENED. IT INTERESTING TO NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT QUEBEC SEPARATISM, WHICH DOMINATED 1970 CONVENTION, WAS HARDLY MENTIONED AT THIS ONE. LIBERAL PROBLEM NOW IS TO CONVINCE WESTERN PROVINCES THAT GOVERNMENT WORKING IN THEIR INTEREST, WITHOUT SHAKING POWER BASE IN QUEBEC AND ONTARIO. THIS IS A LARGE ORDER, AND FEW OBSERVERS BELIEVE LIBERALS CAN MAKE MUCH HEADWAY PRIOR TO NEXT ELECTION.  
SCHMIDT

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## Message Attributes

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